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COMMUNITY STRUCTURAL CHANGES AND THE NATURE OF LEADERSHIP

By Gina L. Gilbreath

ABSTRACT

Many communities in the Southeastern United States have experienced dramatic social and demographic change during the past two decades. Much of this change is brought about by population growth as well as other socio-economic transformations such as increases in per capita income and educational attainment. One result has been an obvious change in leadership and social structure at the county level as engendered by these population and socio-economic factors. The objective of this research is to examine the nature of leadership and structural change in a Southern county that has been experiencing this categorical type of transformation. More specifically, this research focuses upon how changes in local leadership affect the social structure and how this changed social structure affected decision making at the county level.

INTRODUCTION

While it is agreed that social change is pervasive in the world and a great deal of effort is spent trying to predict its outcome (Lauer, 1990; Warren, 1977; Merton, 1957), it is puzzling that few researchers have actually focused on a systematic study of change in the social structure of particular human communities and the role that leadership has in this process. There is increasing evidence that leaders, over time, have new and diverse interests that differ from their predecessors (Warren, 1977). A changed leadership brings with it new images of community structure, needs and problems (Bates, 1975). It also precipitates structural changes in other aspects of community organization (Bates, 1975). A leadership with new backgrounds and different experiential choices possesses different resources, interests and capabilities that impact variably on the social structure of a community. In essence, the present goals and interests of the community are not defined in the same precise manner as they were by the former leadership structure. Additionally, changes in the social structure may have a notable influence on the types of leaders that are selected to represent a changed population base (Bates, 1975).

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Parsons (1951), Blau (1977) and Laumann (1966, 1973) regard social structure as a pattern of relationships among social positions. Their contention is that social structure is institutionalized and individuals constantly move to and from different positions, but that the network connections among positions may remain relatively stable. Finally, positions are given legitimacy once the social structure is supported by a collective value system which defines the relationships and positions within it.

There is still an area of social inquiry, however, which feels that this concept of social structure is inadequate because it does not consider the behavior of individuals and their impact on the social structure. As a result, an additional body of literature has emerged which argues that social structure can more easily be evidenced through the networks of positional actors and their interests (Coleman, 1973; Hunter, 1953). Still, this view of social structure does not adequately reveal social structure in its fullest context. Rather, it only presents a limited view which focuses on change in leadership without focusing on change in the positional structure of a community. This view is also limited because it does not discuss how changing network ties of positional leaders affect other areas of the social structure. What may be important to focus on additionally, then, is how the changing social structure yields a selection of leaders who are different from the former leadership.

In recent years, the Southeast has experienced a great surge in population growth and development (Miller, 1991). Many corporations and industries have moved their operations to the Southeast to escape higher taxes, unions and the like which were becoming characteristic aspects of the Northeastern and Midwestern industrial cities during the late 1970s and 1980s (Miller, 1991). Likewise, many Americans who had formerly lived and worked in these areas have migrated to the Southeast in search of jobs and a higher standard of living. Many of these new Southerners have brought with them a higher expectation of service delivery and more cosmopolitan ideas and values which could not formerly be found in the community. Several communities in the Southeast who have become inundated with new residents and have found it difficult to develop the infrastructure required to support these new expectations for service delivery and the like (Miller, 1991). As a result, the social structure of some of the Southern communities may have changed because of a migration of new and different citizens. In the same manner, this changed population may have selected new leaders who are more representative of the new public concerns and who, in turn, perceive community problems in a new way and make decisions which additionally alter the social structure.

THE PROBLEM

This study is based on the assumption that social structures evolve and change in part as a result of the purposive action of positional leaders. These leaders seek to maximize their self-interests and goals and, depending on their abilities and interests, negotiate and impose a number of relationships on the community which enhance these interests. The patterns of interests and network connections of leaders therefore will reflect of the changes in the social structure and may in fact actually change social structure of the community. Bates (1975) suggests that a conception of social structure helps us perceive and explain social change and provides a better understanding of it. This concept also enables the emergence of the social structure of a community to be more clearly viewed.

Review of Literature

Galaskiewicz's (1979) position that power resides in the social structure of a community and that the resources of power relationships include control over and membership in community organizations and support of interest groups will serve as a guiding assumption for this research. Within a community's leadership structure, formal positions exist which have duties that are required and the incumbents of these positions have official (and binding) role requirements. These requirements exist as a part of the position; while individuals may come and go, these structural requisites persist over time and change only sparingly. On the contrary, the incumbents of these positions engage in daily group behavior that tends not to be prescribed by formal organizational rules. This distinction provides a view of the varying nature of social networks.

Social Structure

The change in the social structure of a community can also be evidenced through examining the links of positions and leadership structure to non-governmental networks both within and outside the community. In other words, a community's social structure may change because the positional leaders' connections to the community change and because peer vested interests change. Because a leader's conception of the community and its perceived problems is based on his or her own background, experience, interests and social ties, when new incumbents occupy positions they bring with them the possibility of change. For

instance, former positional leaders may have had interests and connections geared to agriculture in the county. Hence, the former social structure revolved around an agricultural framework. As a consequence, the foreseen problems of the community and their solutions may have been of an agricultural nature. Later, the positional leaders may have shifted to a group of highly educated professionals who have other professional connections and personal interests. Thus, the images of problems and solutions offered by this group of positional leaders may concentrate on an educational, commercial and professional foundation. In each case, the social structure changes and is affected by the interests, backgrounds and social networks and ties of the positional leaders of the community. The guiding theoretical perspective for this hypothesis is that structural changes occur, in part, because the former and present leadership have different personal characteristics and are embedded differently in the network system.

In this study, an analytical approach which incorporates two logical but differing viewpoints will be assumed in the data analysis to describe and examine evidence of this change in the social structure. This model is as follows:

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

OF LEADERS ----->

**LEADERSHIP'S VIEW
OF COMMUNITY
PROBLEMS**

**NETWORK CONNECTIONS ----->
OF LEADERS**

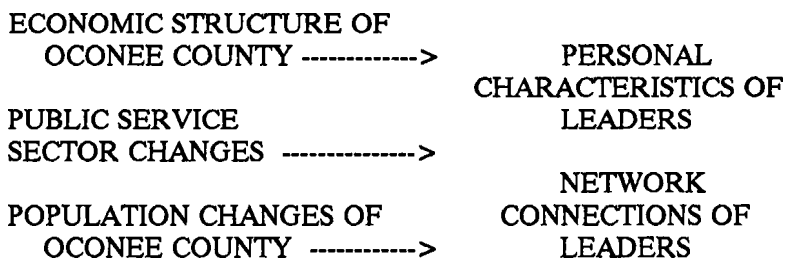
Merton (1957) described a similar type of distinction of positional leaders in a community located on the eastern seaboard of the United States. Merton named one type the "localites" and the other type the "cosmopolitans." The localite leaders were characterized as long-term residents of the community who primarily had network ties inside the community. On the other hand, the cosmopolitan leaders were characterized as newcomers to the community who had business and professional ties outside the community. Therefore, the social structure of the community had a changing local leadership and the changing leadership altered the social structure.

This study views the change in interests of the community and the social structure by examining responses of leadership to major problems and needs of the county. The analysis will focus on the changing composition of the various situses and changes in the leadership structure, which Bates (1975:155) defines as "all the positions that a person occupies in all the groups contained within a single organization to which he

belongs." This study will examine the leaders' personal characteristics as well as their positional ties and networks, which Bates divided into four areas:

1. the number of positions comprising the various situses;
2. the number and complexity of the roles that make up the various positions;
3. the type or content of roles that comprise the structure;
4. the structural linkage and distance between the various positions comprising the various situses. (Bates, 1975:319)

This study provides an examination of how the power structure changes. A further concern involves the degree to which the homogeneity of the leadership conditions the perspectives and decision-making by its members. In addition, outside influences such as changes in the economic and public service sectors of the community as well as population changes may be detected. These changes may affect the planning and management of the county because of differences in the personal characteristics of leaders and their personal connections outside the community. A causal model, presented below, will be used to explain these further causes of change in the social structure:



This model provides an additional analysis of the nature of leadership and the change in the social structure. Its theoretical basis is from Lowry (1965) and Barth (1961), who claim that as the community grows its population and economic structure change, the personal characteristics and social networks of its leaders also change. Based on this theory, the implication of this research is that as economic well-being increases, as demands are made for public services and as the population becomes more complex, the personal characteristics and network connections of leaders will become more elaborate as well.

Still, in both causal model cases, the central concerns of the study are whether there is a shift in the social structure as a result of changes in

positional leaders' networks, interests and social ties, or whether the shift in the social structure had an impact on the types of leaders selected.

DATA AND METHODS

The study area for this research is Oconee County, Georgia which is located in northeast Georgia approximately 100 miles from Atlanta. Oconee County is adjacent to Clarke County, home of the University of Georgia. In Oconee County, as in much of the South, cotton remained king until the coming of the boll weevil and the Great Depression of the 1930s. During this period, there was a trend of out-migration caused by an employment decline in agriculture and the attraction of industrial employment in other counties. In the period between 1960 and 1970, however, the county experienced a resurgence in population with the U.S. Census reporting an incremental increase of 25.6 percent. This population growth trend continued into the next decade with a 57 percent increase in population between 1970 and 1980.

Because of its small size in land area, Clarke County recently has experienced a ceiling in residential development. As a result, neighboring Oconee County has had a boom in housing development and migration since 1980. In fact, the total population in Oconee County in 1990 was 17,618, representing a 41.8 percent increase between 1980 and 1990. Because of continued residential and industrial development in Oconee County, officials estimate a population growth of 100 percent by the year 2000. Additionally, these new residents have a higher level of income. In fact, the per capita income for Oconee County more than doubled from \$7,473 in 1980 to \$16,531 in 1990. These demographic changes are shown in Table 1.

Many of the new residents in Oconee County since 1980 are employed by the University of Georgia or hold professional occupations in related research or government agencies located in Clarke County. As a result of the limitations experienced in residential development in Clarke County since 1980, this higher-educated, more cosmopolitan group has moved to nearby Oconee County, making it a type of middle-class professional "bedroom" community.

The change in positional leadership of Oconee County's social structure will be examined through primary data collected from incumbents of 27 key positions during 1981 and 1991. These positions were identified in a county government directory. Nineteen of the leadership positions were elected (two were positions that had been created since 1981), and 8 were appointed positions.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics Changes of Oconee County, Ga.

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
Total Population	12,424	17,618
Population Density	66.6	94.5
	<u>1970-1980</u>	<u>1980-1990</u>
Percent Population Change	57.0	41.8
Percent Net Migration	82.1	73.9
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1989</u>
Per Capita Income	\$7,853	\$16,531
Rank in Per Capita Income in 159 Counties in Georgia	22	11
	<u>1978</u>	<u>1987</u>
Number of Farms	258	295

Source: U.S. Census of Population, Georgia: 1980 and 1990.
Georgia County Guide, 1987 and 1991.

A total of 52 persons holding the 27 positions in 1981 and 1991 were given questionnaires asking about their personal characteristics and associational patterns. These positions, in many cases, experienced a change in incumbents during the decade and a primary concern is to determine whether or not their associational patterns changed as well.

Other data from secondary sources was obtained from social analyses related to needs, issues and concerns of Oconee County. The data set is longitudinal in nature and was collected in 1981 and 1991 utilizing Community Social Analyses of Oconee County. The data from the 1981 study resulted in the publication *Oconee In Transition: 1981* (Nix, 1981), while the 1991 data constitute the basis for another report published in the same publication series (Miller, 1991). This information is made available through the Community Social Analysis Series in order to aid leaders, citizens and concerned groups in the amelioration of issues, concerns and problems that confront the county. This data set provides the information for a longitudinal analysis of changes in group structure and processes in the study area from which the sample was derived.

Finally, a third and supplementary body of information from secondary sources was used. These data were derived from the U.S. Census: Georgia, 1980 and 1990, and *The Georgia County Guide*, 1987 and 1991. These data provide general population and economic characteristics of Oconee County.

The purpose of these data sets is to show how change in the social structure affected the types of leadership systems that were put in place.

They also will help show how this change in leadership may have influenced the networks, local- and extra-local ties and interests of positional leaders over a 10-year period and hence changed the organizational goals and interests of the community and altered its social structure.

Since the entire populations of leaders have been included in all data sets, it can be said that the correlation of the relationships discussed in the analyses of the approaches is extremely high. Therefore, in this research, descriptive statistics and techniques were imposed on the given finite universes in order to cite the linkages of the independent variables to the dependent ones. Also, Spearman's Rho was utilized in the Supplementary Analysis in order to gauge the degree of agreement among the four pairings of leader and citizen groups from 1981 and 1991 in their ranking of the county's problems. Kendall's Tau was not applied in this analysis because there were no duplicates in the ranking of problems. By using these techniques of analysis, the change in the social structure as viewed through time can be quite evident and show a high degree of correlation.

ANALYSIS

Research Approach A

In this first research approach, it is hypothesized that the personal characteristics and network connections of leaders from a particular time period may effect the way community problems are viewed by the leadership during that same time. In other words, the personal makeup of the leaders and the groups in which they interact have a notable influence on the ways in which they perceive and rank the community's predominant problems.

This research model analyzes the independent variables of ascribed and achieved personal characteristics of leaders from 1981 and 1991 and their network connections during the same two time periods. The theoretical orientation is that as the personal characteristics and network connections of leaders become more cosmopolitan and complex, their views on the predominant problems facing the county will become a reflection of their increased sophistication. Therefore, as the personal characteristics and network ties of leaders are altered over time, the ways in which they view and rank the community's problems will also change.

The results of the examination of Research Approach A indicated that many of the independent variables in the personal characteristics (Table 2) and network connections (Table 3) exerted a consequential influence on the leadership's view of the county's problems (Table 4). The changing

*Gilbreath***Table 2. Personal Characteristics of Leaders from 1981 and 1991.**

<u>Ascribed Characteristics</u>	<u>(Percentages)</u>	
	<u>1981</u>	<u>1991</u>
<u>Sex:</u> Male	60	74
Female	40	26
<u>Age:</u> Less Than 40	28	18.5
40 - 59	68	66.7
60 and Over	4	14.8
<u>Race:</u> White	100	100
Non-White		-
<u>Achieved Characteristics</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1991</u>
<u>Education:</u>		
Less Than High School	4	
High School Graduate	32	22.2
College 1-3 Years	24	18.5
College Graduate	8	14.8
More Than 4 Years of College	32	40.8
<u>Occupation:</u>		
Government Worker or Official	44	59.3
Professional/Technical	24	18.5
Managerial/Administrative	16	3.7
Sales/Clerical	4	3.7
Farmer	4	7.4
Self-Employed	4	3.7
Housewife	4	3.7
<u>Years Lived in Oconee County:</u>		
20 or Less	44	29.6
21 - 40	32	44.5
41 - 60	24	22.2
60 and Over		3.7
<u>Marital Status:</u>		
Married	88	100
Widowed	4	-
Divorced	8	-

- Data not available

Table 3. Network Connections of Leaders from 1981 and 1991.

	(Percentages)			
	1981	1991		
<u>Current Place of Residence:</u>				
Farm	24	18.5		
Open Country, But Not On A Farm	28	44.4		
Community or Unincorporated Town	16	22.3		
Small City (2,500 to 10,000 residents)	32	14.8		
<u>Relatives Living in the County:</u>				
No	32	29.6		
Yes	68	70.4		
<u>Member or Officer in the Following Organizations:</u>				
	1981		1991	
	Member	Officer	Member	Officer
Church	32.8	21.7	29.6	40.9
Sunday School	15.4	13.0	23.5	4.5
Other Church Organizations	9.6	8.8	3.9	13.6
Clubs or Lodges	7.7	34.8	13.7	22.7
Veterans Organizations	5.7	-	3.9	-
Social Clubs	7.7	-	7.8	4.5
Farm Organizations	5.7	-	9.8	4.5
Civic or Community Clubs	15.4	21.7	7.8	9.3
<u>Advisor to Service Related Organizations</u>				
<u>Either Inside and/or Outside the County:</u>				
No	60		44.4	
Yes	40		55.6	
Inside the County	50		33.3	
Outside the County	30		33.3	
Both Inside and Outside the County	20		33.3	
<u>Trustee, Fellow, Sponsor or Board Member</u>				
<u>Of Any Private and/or Public Organizations:</u>				
No	64		59.3	
Yes	36		40.7	
Private	22.2		36.4	
Public	66.7		36.4	
Both Private and Public	11.1		27.2	
<u>Member of Professional or Trade Organizations</u>				
<u>At the State and/or National Level:</u>				
No	56		37	
Yes	44		63	
State Level	54.5		47.1	
National Level	-		11.8	
Both State and National Level	45.5		41.1	

- Data not available

Table 4. Leadership's View of Community Problems

<u>Problem Areas</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
Public Service/Utilities	1	1
Planning and Zoning	2	2
Government/Political/Taxes	3	3
Economy	4	6
Law and Law Enforcement	5	7
Recreation	6	8
Transportation	7	5
Education	7	4
Health and Welfare	8	9
Attitudes/Values	-	10
Housing	-	11

The score is the sum of the weights allotted by total respondents to items in this category.

- Data not available

Sources: Nix (1981); Miller (1991)

ascribed personal characteristics of age, educational levels and occupation of the leaders indicated a difference in how the leaders viewed and ranked the community's problems during the two time periods. The changed network connections of leaders, such as place of residence and membership or office holding in civic organizations, also showed how they may alter the ways in which the leadership views the community's problems over a period of time. Advisory or officer participation in clubs, boards or service organizations also influenced a shift in the leadership's views of the county's problems. The top three problems remained unchanged for both time periods, which created an interesting point concerning the changes in the ranking of the county's problems from 1981 to 1991.

However, the most striking changes in the ranking of the county problems came in the middle-level ranking of those issues and problems viewed as fourth, fifth and sixth. In 1981, leaders saw the economy, law and law enforcement and recreation as the fourth-, fifth- and sixth-ranked concerns or issues facing the county. Contrarily, in 1991, leaders ranked education, transportation and the county's economy as the fourth, fifth and sixth important concerns in the county. This dramatic shift in the view of mid-range issues is most interesting because this change of focus for problems and issues represents a dramatic breakaway from parochial and totally localistic concerns. In addition, the alteration in the ranking of problems is explained perhaps by the changes in the personal characteristics and network connections of leaders from the 1981 period to 1991. The shift in ranking of problems at this level may be due to the

fact that the leaders in 1991 were more cosmopolitan and brought a different set of values and perspectives on change to the offices they occupied.

Research Approach B

An alternate analytical procedure guided by a different theoretical perspective was used in this analysis of leadership and change in the community structure of Oconee County. The intent in introducing this model of analysis is to provide additional information which will give insight into the role of leadership and change in community structure. The intent is to complement the existing model of change that was utilized in the immediately preceding analysis. This alternate model examines as independent variables: (1) economic change and well-being in the county, (2) public service sector changes and (3) population shifts, as these variables influence the personal characteristics and network connections of leaders. Here, the presumed implication is that as economic well-being is enhanced, as increasing demands are made for public services and as the population has become more fragmented and complex, the personal characteristics and network connections of leaders will likewise become more cosmopolitan, complex and more involved with external influences.

From the results of Research Approach B, the changes in the network connections of leaders in Oconee County from 1981 to 1991 (Table 5) may have been influenced by the changes in the general economic and population structure of Oconee County (Table 6) during this same time period. Because of the change in the birthplace and childhood of leaders, it can be determined that Oconee's leaders of 1991 were not representative of a landed gentry, as were the leaders of 1981, who were mostly born in Oconee or in an adjacent county. Together, these factors indicate that Oconee's leadership evolved from one of lifetime residents to one more representative of the newcomers. Again, the change in the birthplace of leadership may have been a reflection of the increasing population who had recently moved to the county. This population may have been more cosmopolitan.

General network connections also indicated a change that was possibly influenced by the economic, public service sector and population changes in Oconee County from 1981 to 1991. The community organizational involvement of leaders increased and this may have been due to a heightened awareness and cosmopolitan participation in the most influential groups in the county. In addition, the specific increased involvement in farm organizations may have been a reflection on the proliferation of farm enterprises in the county's economy. At the same

Table 5. Changes in Leaders' Network Connections

	(Percentages)	
	1980	1990
<u>Birthplace:</u>		
Oconee County	48	18
Adjacent County	24	15
Elsewhere In Georgia	16	31
Adjacent State	12	18
Elsewhere In the United States	-	18
<u>Where Lived Until 18 Years Old:</u>		
On a farm	48	44
In a small town with a population < 2500	24	15
In a city with a population > 2500	28	41
<u>Years Lived in Oconee County:</u>		
20 or less	44	30
21 - 40	32	44
41 - 60	24	22
60 and over	-	4

- Data not available

Table 6. Changes in Leaders' Personal Characteristics

	(Percentages)	
	1980	1990
<u>Occupation:</u>		
Government Worker or Official	44	59
Professional/Technical	24	18
Managerial/Administrative	16	4
Sales/Clerical	4	4
Farmer	4	7
Self-Employed	4	4
Housewife	4	4
<u>Source of Income:</u>		
Operating a Farm	4	25
Operating a Non-Farm Business	12	4
Salary or Wages	80	63
Relatives or Friends	4	4
Retirement Pension		4

- Data not available

Sources: U.S. Census of Population, Georgia: 1980 and 1990.

Georgia County Guide, 1987 and 1991.

Nix (1981)

rate, extra-community organizational affiliation and board membership of leaders may have increased due to their interest in the expanded provision of public services for the county. The increase in membership in trade or professional organizations may have been influenced by the change to a more cosmopolitan, well-educated and higher occupational category of the population in 1991. It can be concluded, then, that the changes in the economic structure, public service sector and population had a notable impact on the alteration of network connections and personal characteristics of leaders from 1981 to 1991.

Supplementary Analysis

Since the entire populations of leaders have been included in all sets of data, it can be said that the correlation of the relationships discussed in the analyses was highly estimable. The focus of this research examined specified variables which, on the basis of existing literature, appeared to be the best predictor of the role of leadership change in community structure. Therefore, by using these techniques, the change in the social structure, as viewed through time, was quite evident and showed a high degree of correlation.

On the basis of study findings to this point in the analysis, it has been shown how change in the social structure is related to changes in the characteristics of leaders. It has also been illustrated how structural changes affect the type of leaders that are elected in a community. In order to understand this correlation better, it is helpful to look at the degree of similarity in community leaders' and citizen groups' rankings of community problems. Leaders' rankings of problems are presented in Table 4, while citizens' rankings are shown in Table 7. It is hypothesized that if the rankings of problems by leaders and citizens show a high degree of similarity in both 1981 and 1991, then how the community is perceived has experienced little or no change. However, if the groups' rankings are quite different, then it can be assumed that change indeed has occurred.

Using Spearman's Rho, comparisons are made of the ranking of community problems between the four following groups: leadership groups from 1981 and 1991; citizen groups from 1981 and 1991; leaders and citizens from 1981; and leaders and citizens from 1991. By using this measure of correlation, the degree of agreement or correlation between the perceptions of these groups can be assessed. The groups will be in perfect agreement when the correlation coefficient or r is $+1.0$ and in perfect disagreement when it is -1.0 . When no relationship exists, the rho will be zero. By making use of the normal table, it can be seen that the relationship is determined significant at the .01 level. The measure of

Table 7. Citizens' View of Community Problems

<u>Problem Areas</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
Public Service/Utilities	1	1
Planning and Zoning	4	3
Government/Political/Taxes	5	7
Economy	8	4
Law and Law Enforcement	6	6
Recreation	7	8
Transportation	3	2
Education	2	5
Health and Welfare	9	9
Attitudes/Values	-	11
Housing		10

The score is the sum of the weights allotted by total respondents to items in this category.

- Data not available

Sources: Nix (1981); Miller (1991)

Spearman's Rho will permit this research to see if change in the perception of community problems has indeed occurred. The presence of change will be determined if the rank correlation coefficients are different between the groups under examination or if the degree of agreement between the citizens and leaders is different for different time periods. If the rank correlation coefficients are not the same, then it can be concluded that change has occurred in the way community problems are perceived. These changes may then be related to changes in structure of the community.

The first group to which the measure, Spearman's Rho, was applied is between the leadership from 1981 and the leadership in 1991. The rank correlation coefficient between these two groups was .75. This indicates that the leaders from the two time periods had a highly significant correlation in their ranking of the community's problems. In other words, the groups of leaders from the two time periods saw the community's problems in much the same way.

The second category of groups on which Spearman's Rho was applied was the groups of citizen respondents from 1981 and 1991. These two groups were compared in their rankings of the community's problems to examine the similarity of their ordering of the problems. The rank correlation coefficient was highly significant at .73 indicating that the citizens in 1991 had a similar order of rankings of the community's problems when compared with the citizens from 1981.

As evidenced by the data, the citizen groups from 1981 and 1991 had almost the same degree of correlation as did the leadership groups from

the two time periods. This similarity in the leaders and citizens rank correlation coefficients indicates that the leaders and citizens from the two time periods changed very little in the way that they viewed the community's problems. This finding also shows that over the 10-year period the citizen groups and the leadership groups of Oconee County changed at almost the same degree in their correlation of the rankings of the county's problems.

The rankings of problems by leaders and citizens from 1981 and the leaders and citizens from 1991 also were examined to determine whether they were alike in their ranking of the county's problems. This additional inquiry was needed to indicate the level of change in the similarity of leaders and citizens rankings of the county's problems.

The leaders and citizens from 1981 were compared in terms of their ranking correlation. The rank correlation coefficient between these groups was .35. This coefficient, although low, was nevertheless at a significant level. Leaders and citizens were somewhat similar in their ranking of the county's problems. When the leaders and citizens from 1991 were examined, however, their rank correlation coefficient increased to .85. This increase in the correlation suggests that the leaders and citizens from 1991 were much more congruent in their rankings of the county's problems, when compared with the leaders and citizens from 1981.

Finally, from the results of the supplementary analysis, it appears that leaders and citizens in 1991 became more alike in their views of the community's problems than they were in 1981. As a result of this congruency, it is contended that the population in 1991 selected leaders who were more in touch with public concerns. It was also believed that the leaders in 1981 were selected during the period before the community experienced structural change. Hence, the 1981 leaders did not see some of the same concerns as the citizens from 1981. During that time, the Oconee County population consisted of a mixture of oldtimers and an increasing number of newcomers who held different opinions than the leadership. In the decade since 1981, the new population increased even more and influenced the selection of leaders.

From this analysis, an additional explanation has been found which shows not only how the social structure of the community changed as a result of the changing characteristics of the population and leaders, but also how the leadership changed as a result of the changed characteristics of the citizenry of Oconee County. From this it can be concluded that an increasing proportion of the leaders were selected in the county because they seemed to be more able to read the concerns of their diverse constituency. The leaders in 1991 may have been more cognizant and more attuned to the interests of divergent groups than were the leaders

from 1981, and were therefore more competent at handling the competing agendas of the diverse groups of citizens.

DISCUSSION

The analysis section of Approach A shows how the changing personal characteristics and network connections of leaders is an interacting system with how the leadership views the community's problems. This section reported the differences in leaders' personal characteristics and network connections from 1981 to 1991 and showed how differences in these two variables actually influenced the ways in which leaders viewed the community's concerns. Although there was no change in the listing of the top three problems facing the county from 1981 to 1991, the shift in the mid-range concerns indeed reflects the growing complexity, cosmopolitan character and issue orientation of the leaders since 1981 (see Table 4). Therefore, it can be resolved that the community's social structure slightly shifted because the positional leaders' interests changed. Because of the changes in leaders' personal backgrounds, experiences and social networks from 1981 to 1991, they constructed their own image of Oconee County and its problems. This, in turn, affected the social structure of the community because the leaders in 1991 had a new agenda when compared with the leaders of 1981.

In addition to these findings, a second set of influences in the role of leadership and change in community structure was examined. Approach B showed how changes in the economic structure, public service sector changes and population changes were correlated with the kinds of personal characteristics and network connections that leaders have. Indeed, this research found that as economic well-being is enhanced, as demands for public services are made and as the population becomes more complex and cosmopolitan, the types of personal characteristics and network connections that leaders have will reflect these changes.

Finally, the supplementary analysis examined the degree to which the leaders and citizens from 1981 and 1991 were correlated in their rankings of the community's problems. This analysis found that change occurred in the perception of community problems. However, the ways in which the problems were defined remained quite similar between the two time periods. The overall contention of these findings is that the citizens from 1991 selected leaders who were more in tune with the growing diverse population's concerns, when compared with the groups from 1981.

The findings of this research suggest that the county's social structure changed due to the changes in other parts of Oconee County's social structure. It was discovered that structural changes are more likely to

affect the types of leaders selected by the population rather than the kinds of leaders having a notable influence on changes in the social structure.

CONCLUSION

Indeed, Oconee County has characteristically become a more metropolitan county from 1981 to 1991. During that time, much growth in the population and economy of the nearby Clarke County occurred, causing a limit on residential development there. Looking for a close place to live, many workers in Clarke County began moving to adjacent Oconee County in search of a residence. This trend in migration sparked a great deal of residential development and changes in the economic structure of Oconee County. The new migrants brought with them a high level of education and income, coupled with more cosmopolitan and urban attitudes. As a result, they were more issue-oriented, especially with regard to public services.

Taken together, these factors influenced change in social structure between 1981 and 1991. The result of these structural changes is a shift in leadership to a current group that is characterized by more education, and that is more attuned to the issues concerning all citizens of the county. Consequently, this new leadership is abreast of issues concerning groups which affect the agendas of the county government. This was shown in the mid-range rankings of county problems. Furthermore, the growing majority of newcomers to the county made a great deal of demands on the leadership representing them. The new social structure and the population who contributed to its change therefore selected and appointed decision makers in county government who shared their concerns. A consequence of these structural changes is that there is a growing conflict between the factions of "oldtimers" and "newcomers." Still, it was shown in the analysis that the leaders from 1991 were more responsive to the interests of the diverse groups and therefore are more proficient in managing conflict in the community.

From an applied perspective, it can be seen that as a community grows and develops with a new and diverse population, the social structure of the community may change as well. This alteration in the social structure may occur because as new populations move in with different values and interests, they will be more likely to select leaders who are more in touch with their concerns. These leaders, in turn, will view the problems facing the community in a much different light than did the leadership from a time before migration and population changes. Therefore, not only will the leadership change as a result of demographic changes, but the social structure will change as well because of a new perception of the

community's problems by the new leaders. These two changes will occur simultaneously with one effecting the other in a kind of cyclical causality.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research contributes to the understanding of how social structure changes over time due to the changes in the types of leaders of a community. It also offers an explanation on how structural influences affect the types of leaders chosen to make decisions in the community.

Future researchers in this area may wish to examine more closely the degree to which leaders and citizens are alike in the ways they perceive the community. Although a brief investigation of this was conducted in the supplementary analysis of this research, a more comprehensive look may be beneficial in the understanding of how a community's structural changes affect the types of leaders selected. Furthermore, this possible analysis should focus on the possibility and extent that the newly selected representative leaders of the changed population attempt to perceive and solve the community's problems according to the new population's interests.

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